ABSTRACT

       The present invention relates to a retrieval method
for searching a first character element string obtained by
5   subjecting a character string to character recognition for
a second character element string. The first character
element string includes a first character element and the
second character element string includes a second character
element. A distance relevant to a similarity between the
10   first character element and the second character element
is predetermined between the first character element and
the second character element. The retrieval method
comprises the steps of comparing the distance with a
predetermined reference distance, and determining whether
15   the second character element matches the first character
element based on a result of the comparison of the distance
with the predetermined reference distance.